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## Information from your Patient Aligned Care Team

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# Tips for Improving Communication with your Primary Care Provider

### What can I do to become a better patient?

Although your Primary Care Provider has gone through many years of training, having all the necessary information is vital to meeting your healthcare needs. Physical exams and tests play an important role with healthcare, however patient information serves as the primary and most critical source of healthcare information. In order to make a more informed decision during your appointment your PCP needs all the relevant information.

Sometimes patients do not communicate all the important information due to time constraints and uncertainty about what is relevant.

The following are some patient guidelines that may be helpful with improving the communication with your PCP:

- Prepare for your appointment
- Write down questions you have for you PCP prior to your appointment. You may want to consider the attached patient appointment worksheet as a guide.
- Repeat and Write down medication and instructions.
- Practice assertive communications skills with your PCP. Assertiveness is communicating in an appropriate, honest, and respectful manner.
- Ask for clarification and ask questions. If something does not sound quite right, tell your PCP that you are not clear and ask questions. Sometimes patients will be given conflicting information, it is imperative that your PCP is aware of the conflict. Your PCP will appreciate the possibility of not making a mistake and appreciate knowing you have heard their instructions/recommendations.
- Consider an active and collaborative role in your healthcare. You know yourself better than anyone does. Information communicated in a clear and considerate manner helps your PCP make a more informed decision about you.
- Give your provider feedback. Change is facilitated through awareness. It is helpful for the clinic and patient care if patients provide feedback through the proper channels. There are not always opportunities to give your PCP feedback during the appointment. Various places to raise concerns or provide feedback are through comment cards, front office staff, and patient advocate.

## Patient Appointment Worksheet

Your provider would like to make the most out of the time you spend together. An average appointment time is approximately 15 minutes. This can be overwhelming for patients, so it may be helpful to fill out this guide either before coming to your appointment or in the waiting area just prior to your appointment.

What is the most important matter I would like to discuss with my Provider?

Current medications? Am I experiencing any adverse effects from my medications?

Other questions or concerns I would like to address with my PCP (time permitting)?

### Notes

Please use this space to write down important points made during your appointment (include things that you will need to remember such as medication changes, diagnosis, recommendations, things to look out for, etc.)

Next Appointment is scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_